

Hill Newspaper Comes Under Fire

■ Roll Call, the Capitol Hill newspaper, came under fire on the Senate floor this week for reporting that the FBI had concluded three decades ago that the late senator Quentin Burdick (D-N.D.) was once a Communist sympathizer.

"Shameful," said Sen. Kent Conrad (D-N.D.).

"A shoddy bit of journalism," said Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.).

"I would have thought that McCarthyism was dead," said Sen. Hank Brown (R-Colo.).

Roll Call editor Stacy Mason said, "We don't apologize for running the story. We just felt any reasonable person would see this for what it is: an example of the insanity of the FBI." In an editorial to be published Monday, the paper will apologize "if we failed to make clear to our readers" that the article was "an indictment" of the FBI and former director J. Edgar Hoover.

Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.) said he called FBI Director Louis J. Freeh, demanding an apology to the Burdick family and Freeh has agreed to write a letter of apology to Burdick's widow, Jocelyn.

According to documents from 1959 to 1965 obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, the FBI kept an eye on Burdick during the 1940s and noted that he had "a close association," in Hoover's words, with some Communist Party members.

Sen. Howard M. Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), decrying what he called "sleazy Red-baiting," has introduced a resolution with seven colleagues to strip Hoover's name from the bureau's Washington headquarters.

—Howard Kurtz

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